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THE Idiot
ROOT: PART THREE
PETER MILLIGAN
NORM BREYFOGLE

# The Idiot

## PART THREE: INTO THE IDIOT ZONE

CONTINUED FROM DETECTIVE #639
YOU'RE DELUDING YOURSELF, CROSBY.
THE IDIOT DOESN'T TAKE ANYONE TO HEAVEN. HE SIMPLY EATS THEIR MINDS.
ONLY TO LIBERATE THEM FROM THE EVILS OF THE MATERIAL WORLD.
PREPARE TO BE LIBERATED, BATMAN...

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FUT
ZENO! WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
COMING TO MY SENSES.
BUT YOU'RE MY ASSISTANT! WHAT ABOUT OUR MASTER? WHAT ABOUT THE IDIOT MESSIAH?
IT'S CRAZY AND IT'S WRONG, CROSBY.
AND YOU DON'T KNOW HOW GOOD IT FEELS TO DO SOMETHING RIGHT FOR A CHANGE.
JUDAS!
I SHOULDN'T HAVE TRUSTED AN IGNORANT INDIAN...
BONK!
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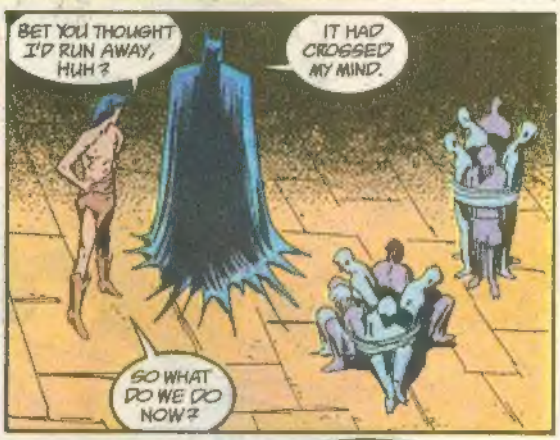
BATMAN...
PICK UP THE SYRINGE, ZENO. WELL DONE.
AIIEE!
ZENO!
DOWN!
ZWEEEEEE
PAF
ZWEEEEEEEEEE

SEE THESE LITTLE CHERUBS ARE SECURE WHILE I UNTIE MY FEET.
WHAT ABOUT CROSBY?

WE'LL WORRY ABOUT HIM LATER.


BET YOU THOUGHT I'D RUN AWAY, HUH?
IT HAD CROSSED MY MIND.
SO WHAT DO WE DO NOW?

NOW WE DESTROY THE IDIOT.

MAYBE IF WE JUST SEPARATE THE FOUR MENTAL PATIENTS THE IDIOT WILL BE DESTROYED. IT WAS THE LINK-UP BETWEEN THEM THAT MADE HIM.
I WISH IT WERE THAT EASY.

CROSSBY'S NOTES ON HIS EXPERIMENTS SAY THAT THE PATIENTS' MINDS WERE LINKED BY THE IDIOT ROOT...
A FIFTH PERSONALITY WAS CREATED, A SYNERGISTIC EFFECT...
...IT WAS FORMED FROM THE JOINING, THE INTEGRATION OF THE DARK SIDES, THE HIDDEN SUB-CONSCIOUS ELEMENTS OF THE PATIENTS' MINDS...
AND THE FIFTH PERSONALITY IS THE IDIOT. SO HOW DO WE GET RID OF HIM?
AS YOU SAID, WE HAVE TO BREAK THE LINK BETWEEN THE FOUR MINDS. BUT WE CAN'T DO THAT HERE IN THIS WORLD...
THEIR MINDS ARE NO LONGER IN THIS WORLD.
THEIR MINDS ARE IN THE IDIOT ZONE. THAT'S WHERE WE HAVE TO BREAK THE LINK.
BUT THAT MEANS GOING INTO THE IDIOT ZONE, INTO THE UNREAL WORLD OF THE IDIOT, OURSELVES!
HOW MUCH DO YOU KNOW ABOUT THE IDIOT ROOT?

GENERATIONS AGO MY PEOPLE USED IT IN RELIGIOUS CEREMONIES.
BUT ONLY BY THOSE WHOSE MINDS HAD UNDERGONE RIGOROUS TRAINING TO BE ABLE TO COPE WITH THE UNREAL WORLD THE IDIOT ROOT TOOK YOU TO...
THEY TOOK IT BY CHEWING THE RAW ROOT. THE EFFECTS DIDN'T LAST SO LONG AND WERE EASIER TO CONTROL..
CROSBY DISTILLED THE ESSENCE OF THE ROOT. HE MADE DOSES TWENTY TIMES STRONGER THAN MY FOREFATHERS TOOK.
THIS IS WHERE HE DISTILLED IT. AND THAT'S WHAT THE IDIOT ROOT LOOKS LIKE NATURALLY.
ONCE SWALLOWED IT TAKES ABOUT THIRTY SECONDS TO TAKE EFFECT...
IT GOES AGAINST EVERYTHING HE BELIEVES IN. IT'S THE VERY STUFF THAT CREATED THE DEAD BOYS IN RIO...
HE CAN'T TAKE IT, CAN'T CORRUPT HIS MIND AND BODY WITH THIS POISON...
BUT IF HE DOESN'T TAKE IT, WHAT THEN? THE IDIOT BECOMES REAL.
THE IDIOT WINS. THE IDIOT GOES ON EATING MINDS...

SOMETIMES TO BEAT THE DEVIL YOU MUST PLAY THE DEVIL'S TUNES...
I'M GOING TO TRY TO BREAK THE LINK IN THE UNREAL WORLD.
CRNCH MNCH
IF I COME OUT AND HAVEN'T DONE IT YET, YOU'LL HAVE TO FEED ME MORE ROOT...
YOU ALSO HAVE TO MAKE SURE CROSBY DOESN'T GET TO MY BODY WHILE MY MIND IS ELSEWHERE
ARE YOU SURE THIS ROOT IS FOR REAL? IT'S BEEN AT LEAST FIFTY SECONDS...
MAYBE YOU HAVE A STRONG CONSTITUTION.
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WELCOME TO THE IDIOT ZONE, BATMAN.
DON'T FIGHT HIM. JUST AVOID HIM. GET TO THE PATIENTS...
BUT IT SEEMS I HAVE SOME COMPETITION. YOU'RE AS BIG AN IDIOT AS I AM FOR COMING HERE...
BREAK THE LINK...
THIS IS MY WORLD..
FLOOP
NOT QUITE, BUT CLOSE ENOUGH.
HELL!

HOW'RE YOU GETTING ON IN THERE, BATMAN? HOPE YOU'RE...
WOK!
LITTLE SKUNK.
I'LL KILL YOU BOTH NOW...
HOW I LOOK FORWARD TO THIS FEAST! WHAT A SMORGASBORD OF DELIGHTS YOUR MIND WILL OFFER!
WHAT A PUFF PASTRY FULL OF SAVORY HEAVEN AWAITS ME!
CAN YOU FEEL YOUR MIND BEGINNING TO UNRAVEL?
CAN YOU FEEL IT, BATMAN?
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I'VE NEVER KILLED SOMEONE IN COLD BLOOD BEFORE
NOW'S THE TIME TO START
SUCH A STRANGE NOTION, SOMETHING ABOUT TURNIPS AND NAPOLEON
THE JELLY MUD CLINGS LIKE GETTING LOCORETTE, BUT HE FIGHTS IT.
SOMEHOW, FIGHTS, EVEN AS HE FEEL... STICKY FINGERS PROBING HIS THOUGHTS...
HE FIGHTS. AND THEN HE THINKS...
THAT'S WRONG. DON'T FIGHT IT
DON'T FIGHT IT
THIS IS THE UNREAL WORLD JOE T LIKE THE EXOTIC UNREALITY
T...

DON'T LET YOUR MIND GO, TURN IT TO THE SLIPPERY MUD JELLY THAT THE MONSTER CAN'T HOLD!
USE IT AS ZENO'S FOREFATHERS MUST HAVE USED IT TO SURVIVE IN THE UNREAL WORLD...
YOU ARE NO ORDINARY MAN
YOU'RE NO ORDINARY MIND
N-NO...
SWAT
UNGGG

YOU BROKE ONE OF MY NAILS
GOOD
NO PLEASE I'LL BE GOOD!
I WON'T BE AN IDIOT I WON'T EVEN BE SLIGHTLY SILLY ANYMORE
POP
NOOAAAHH!
OH GOD
IT HURTS
I'M BACK
YEAH I'M
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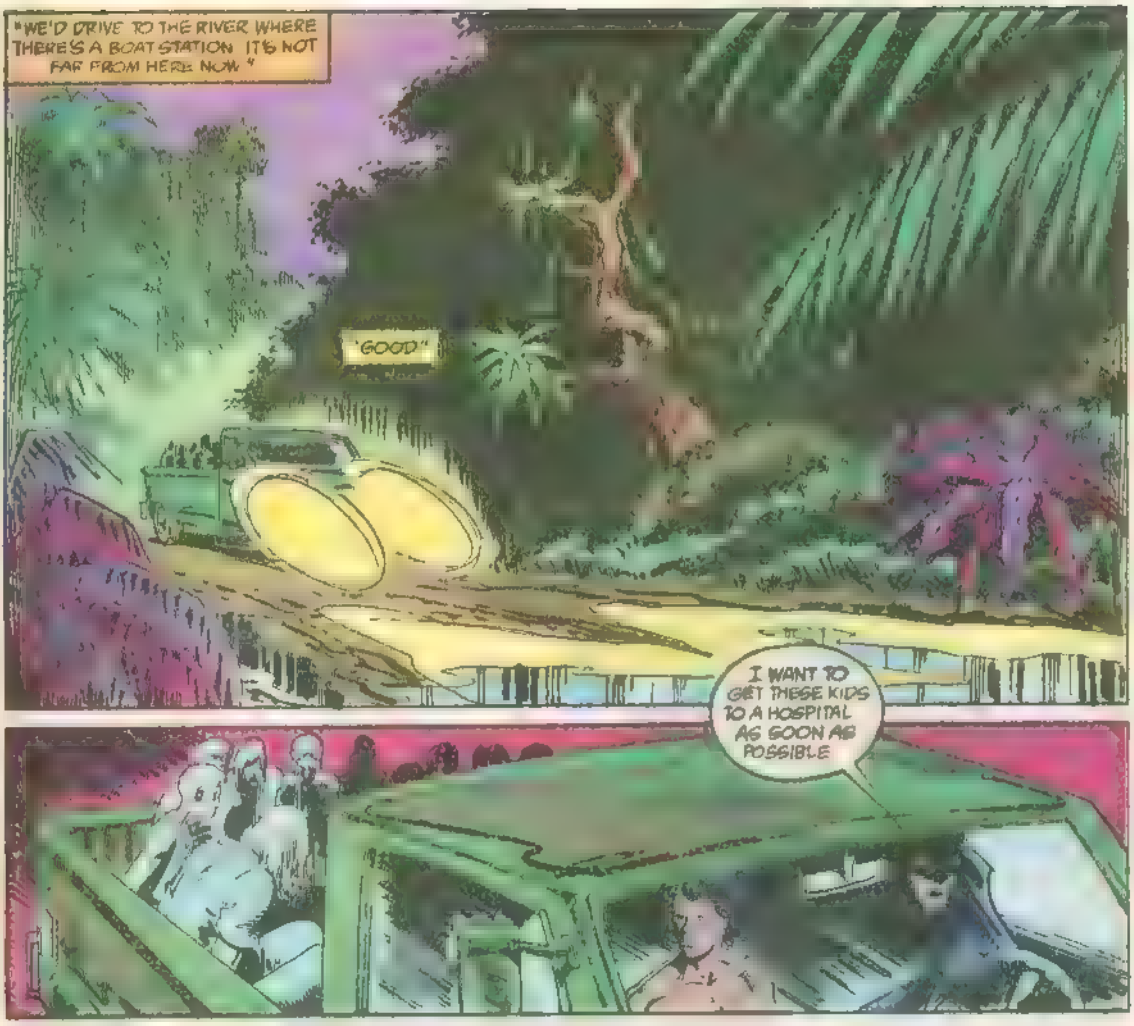
ZENO?
WHUFF
YOU'VE DONE IT? THE IDIOT, HE'S -
GONE. DISINTEGRATED
THE LINK BETWEEN THE MINDS THAT CREATED HIM HAS BEEN BROKEN
NOW ALL WE HAVE TO DO IS GET THIS BUNCH OUT OF THE JUNGLE

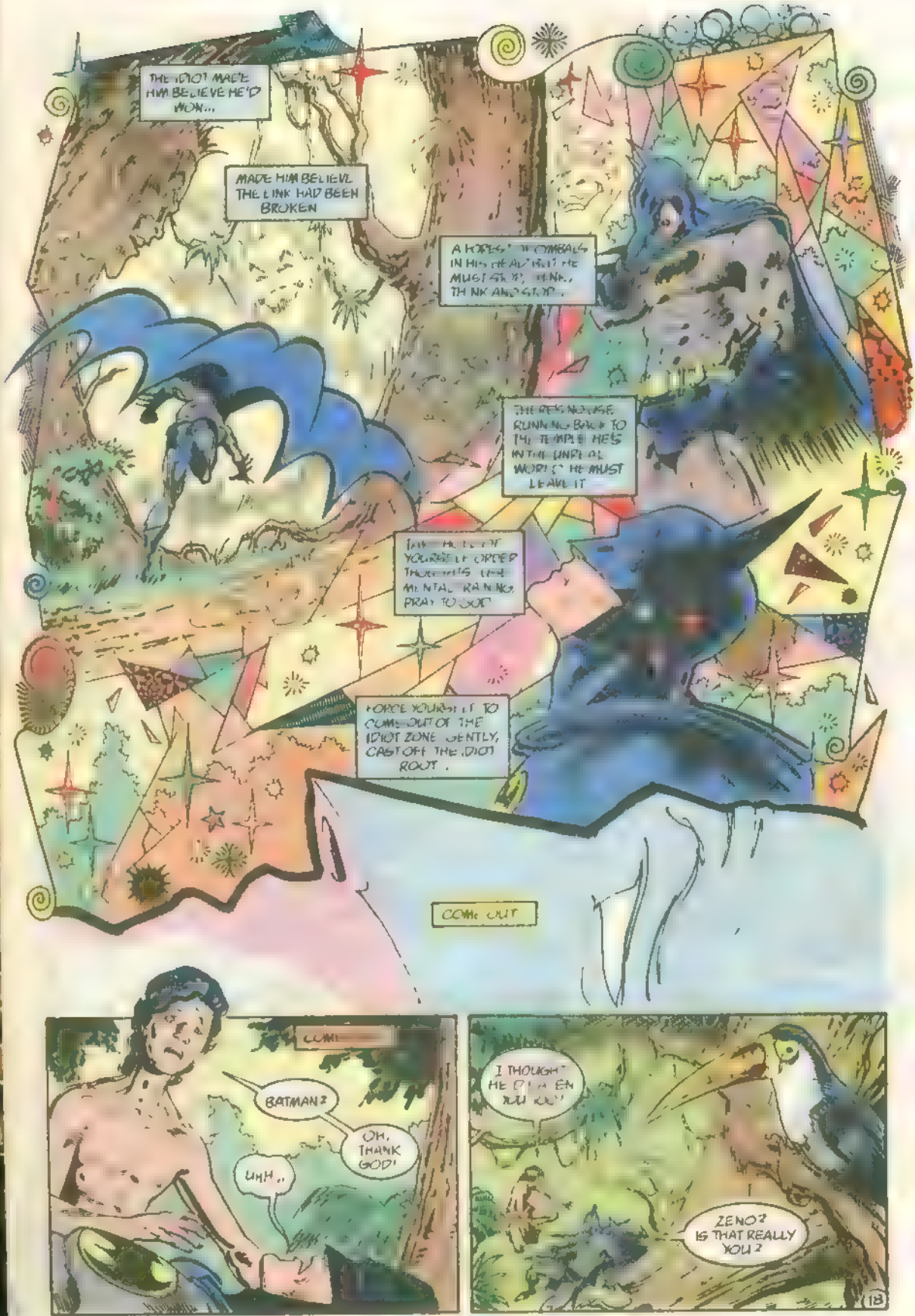

"WE'D DRIVE TO THE RIVER WHERE THERE'S A BOAT STATION IT'S NOT FAR FROM HERE NOW."
"GOOD"
I WANT TO GET THESE KIDS TO A HOSPITAL AS SOON AS POSSIBLE

THE RIVER IS LIKE AN ANIMAL, WITH AN ANIMAL'S SMELL...
HE CAN'T HELP THINKING THERE'S SOMETHING WRONG, SOMETHING MISSING. THE JUNGLE SEEMS EMPTY...
WELL, ZENO?
IT'S OFTEN DESERTED LIKE THIS SOMETIMES YOU HAVE TO WAIT HOURS BEFORE ANYONE SHOWS UP
NOTHING TO DO BUT WAIT
GET THE OTHERS SETTLED IN FOR THE NIGHT

THE NIGHT IS DARK, THE RIVER DARKER
THE NOISES GO STRANGE, HIS THOUGHTS GO DISTURBING
THE DAWN SO SUDDEN
SUDDEN, AND QUIET, AND THERE'S STILL SOMETHING MISSING
GET EVERYONE READY I CAN HEAR SOMETHING COMING
WHAT IS IT? A STEAMER?
I DON'T KNOW DOESN'T SOUND LIKE A STEAMER SOUNDS LIKE MORE THAN ONE ENGINE OF SOME KIND
MAYBE SPEED BOATS ALWAYS WANTED TO RIDE IN A SPEEDBOAT
THAT'D BE SO APPETIZING...
WHAT DID YOU SAY?
NOTHING
LOOK
NO NO, THIS IS TOTALLY...
TOTALLY...

IDIOTIC

INDIANS RIDING BLUE CADILLACS DOWN THE AMAZON
ZENO, WHAT IS THIS?
ZENO...?
EVER BEEN MADE AN IDIOT OUT OF, BATMAN?
OH NO...
IDIOT!
IDIOT!
OH NO
IT ISN'T REAL
IDIOT!
IDIOT!
NONE OF THIS IS REAL
THE UNREAL WORLD IT ISN'T OVER
SPLOOT
HE'S STILL INSIDE THE IDIOT ZONE
THE IDIOT HAS TRICKED HIM.


THE IDIOT MADE HIM BELIEVE HE'D WON...
MADE HIM BELIEVE THE LINK HAD BEEN BROKEN
A VOICE IN HIS HEAD TOLD HIM HE MUST STOP, THINK, THINK AND STOP.
THERE'S NO CASE RUNNING BACK TO THE TEMPLE HE'S IN THE UNREAL WORLD. HE MUST LEAVE IT
FORCE YOURSELF TO COME OUT OF THE IDIOT ZONE. GENTLY, CAST OFF THE IDIOT ROUT.
COME OUT
COME
BATMAN?
OH, THANK GOD!
UHH..
I THOUGHT HE DIED EN YOU DO!
ZENO? IS THAT REALLY YOU?

ARE YOU REAL?
OF COURSE I'M REAL.
THEN HOW... HOW DID I GET OUT HERE? I LEFT MY BODY IN THE TEMPLE.
CROSBY ATTACKED ME. HE ALMOST KILLED US BOTH. HE HAD A KNIFE.
I MANAGED TO FIGHT HIM OFF. THEN HE STARTED UNTYING HIS ANGELS. I WAS GOING TO BE SWAMPED...
WHILE HE WAS DOING THAT I MADE A DECISION. I COULDN'T STOP HIM SO I PULLED YOU OUT OF THE TEMPLE.
YOU... PULLED ME?
I'M STRONGER THAN I LOOK, AND I WAS DESPERATE. CROSBY WOULD HAVE KILLED US BOTH.
I GUESS HE STILL COULD HAVE IF HE'D COME AFTER US, BUT HE DIDN'T.
HE DIDN'T CARE ABOUT US ANYMORE, ONLY HIS ANGELS.
I CREPT BACK TO THE TEMPLE, LOOKED THROUGH THE WINDOW.
IT WAS PRETTY SICKENING, BATMAN.
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"HE GAVE THEM ALL THE ROOT. THEY JUST LINED UP FOR HIM. THEY WANTED TO GO TO HEAVEN..."
"IT DIDN'T TAKE LONG FOR THE KIDS TO BECOME DEAD BOYS. THE IDIOT WAS HAVING A REAL FEAST..."
OH LOOK HOW I'VE SERVED YOU, MASTER!
"THE HEADS JUST BLEW UP."
"THEY JUST BLEW UP BEFORE MY EYES."
I FEEL SO REAL..
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I CAN'T WAIT TO DINE ON THE DELIGHTS OF RIO. CAN'T WAIT TO DIP MY TONGUE INTO ALL THAT SUCCULENT CONSCIOUSNESS...
I'M SO HUNGRY I THINK I'LL START ON YOU, NOW YOU'RE NO LONGER ANY USE TO ME...
ME? BUT I SERVED YOU SO WELL, MASTER!
AND NOW I SERVE MYSELF.
OH DEAR, CROSBY, RATHER AN OVERCOOKED MIND, LACKING ALL BUT THE MOST OBVIOUS SPICES...
THAT'S WHEN I RAN. CAME BACK TO YOU. WAITED FOR YOU TO COME BACK TO YOUR BODY...
THEN WE'VE LOST. WHEN I WAS IN THE IDIOT ZONE, THE IDIOT FOOLED ME INTO THINKING I'D BROKEN THE LINK AND KILLED THE IDIOT...
WHY?
TO GIVE HIMSELF TIME TO PREY ON ENOUGH MINDS TO MAKE HIMSELF REAL.
WHILE HE WAS EATING THOSE MINDS, I WAS IN AN UNREAL JUNGLE OF HIS OWN MAKING, UNDER THE ILLUSION I'D ALREADY BEATEN HIM.
AND SO NOW HE'S REAL.
...AND HEADED FOR RIO.
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SLIM, SOMETHING'S HAPPENING TO ONE OF THE DEAD BOYS.
HOSPITAL
HIS HEAD JUST STARTED SWAYING...
SWAYING?
SWAYING.
MAYBE IT'S A HOPEFUL SIGN, HUH?
I GUESS ANY SIGN FROM THOSE ZOMBIES IS A HOPEFUL SIGN...
OH LORD...
CONTINUED IN DETECTIVE #640!